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7-23-1913

SERVICE, COST AND RESULTS

OF THE WORK
OF THE

DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

1913—1917

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
139 CENTRE STREET

FACTS AND FIGURES

Showing the Quantity and Cost
of the Work of

The Department of Health

FOR A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD

With a Summary of the Results
to the Public Health



1917

S. S. GOLDWATER, M. D.,
Commissioner of Health,
February 1, 1914, to November 22, 1915.

HAVEN EMERSON, M. D.,
Commissioner of Health,
November 22, 1915, to January 1, 1918.

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Hon. JOHN PURROY MITCHEL, Mayor:

SIR—Your administration will be measured as much by its results in the protection and saving of human lives as by any record of accomplishments in the sphere of finance, law or material equipment for transacting the city's business. Allow me to offer herewith a brief record of public health protection during the past four years, and for comparison a statement of service and results in the year with the best previous record in the city's history. The confidence which you have placed in the Department and the independence of action in matters within the sphere of its technical work which your administration has granted, have been indispensable factors in whatever success has been achieved. In reporting here upon my service under your appointment, it is a pleasure to pay full tribute to the ability and devotion of the Directors of the Bureaus of the Department, within their respective fields, and to the loyalty of the personnel of the Department as a whole to the best interests of the city's health.

Respectfully,

HAVEN EMERSON,
Commissioner of Health.

December 31st, 1917.

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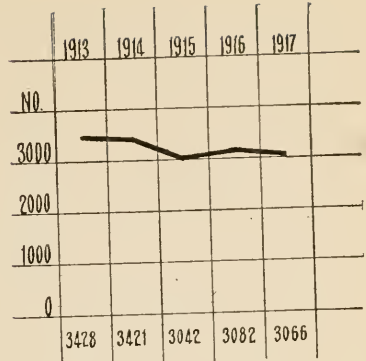
HAVEN EMERSON,
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December 31st, 1917.

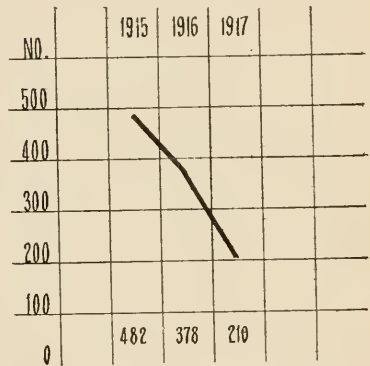
SERVICE AND COST.

There has been no increase in the number of employees in the Department of Health but despite this fact a higher grade of service and more full time positions in the professional groups has been provided. Medical supervision of the employees inaugurated in 1914 has resulted in a material reduction in the number absent during each of the past three years on account of illness, and further in a notable reduction in the percentage of days lost throughout the Department because of illness. These results lend great force to the argument already presented to you for a medical service for all city employees, a plan adopted by almost all careful and successful private industries.

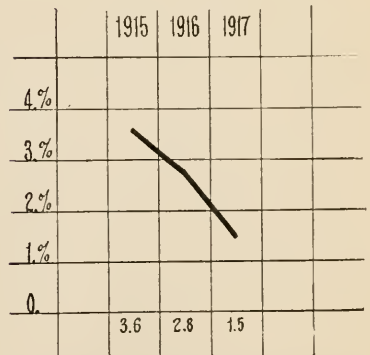
The per capita cost of the Department service to the taxpayers has been decreased and is at a point below which it cannot safely be reduced without neglect of some or many of the fundamental procedures and precautions upon which a low mortality and low morbidity rate depend. The reduction effected holds good whether the total expenditure is considered or whether the cost of operating the hospitals is excluded for each year.



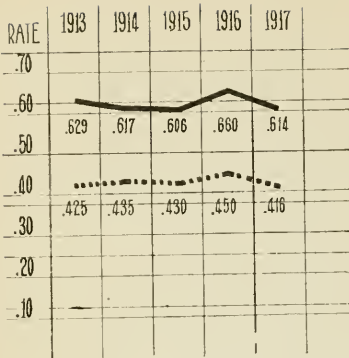
1. Number of Employees.



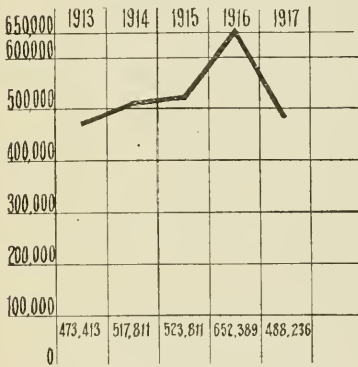
2. Number of Employees absent during the year on account of illness.



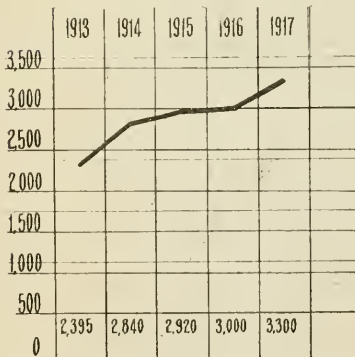
3. Percentage of days lost by Employees on account of illness.



4. Per capita cost of Dept. of Health
 Total
 Per capita cost of Dept. of Health
 Exclusive of Hospitals



5. Patient days provided for cases of
 Communicable Diseases in Department
 Hospitals.

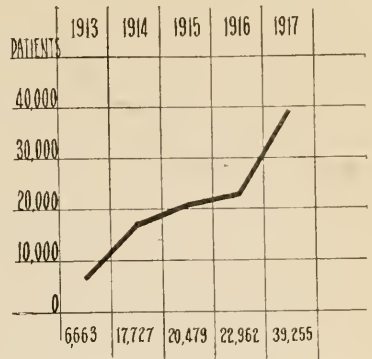


6. Bed Capacity of Department Hospitals.

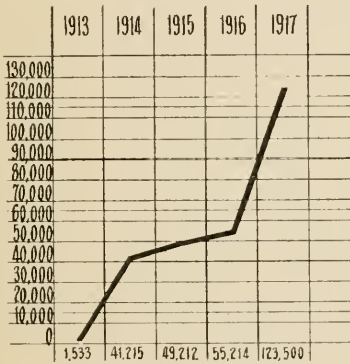
In spite of the stationary force and lower cost, certain notable increases in service to the city, and a number of important innovations in sanitary supervision, have been accomplished without sacrificing any of the standards or established procedures of known value. The increase in hospital accommodations is especially valuable. In connection with these charts it must be remembered that 1916 was a year of special emergency, when every resource of the Department of Health hospitals and of many private hospitals were used to meet the needs for hospital care of the poliomyelitis cases. In addition to the patient days provided in Department of Health Hospitals in 1916, there were 36,685 days' care provided for poliomyelitis cases in other than Department of Health hospitals. On August 21st, 1916, a total emergency bed capacity of 3,479 beds was provided in Department hospitals and an actual hospital census of 3,334 patients was reached. Of these 2,517 were cases of poliomyelitis and 817 cases of other communicable diseases. It is to be noted that only by having provision in contagious disease hospitals for more than the average or even the usual seasonal incidence of epidemic diseases can the community danger from failure to isolate such cases in time of special prevalence be escaped.

Services at the advisory clinics for venereal diseases have been expanded and are now available in all boroughs.

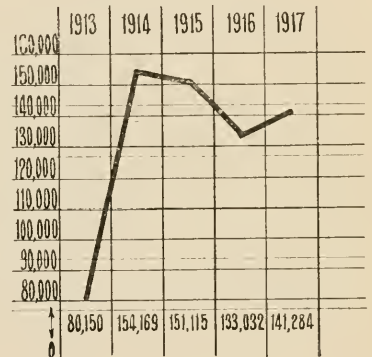
The diagnostic laboratories have increased their capacity for high grade technical work with no reduction in accuracy and with great addition to the convenience of physicians. (See charts 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.)



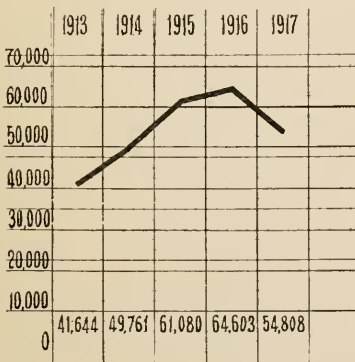
7. Attendance at Venereal Disease Advisory Clinics.



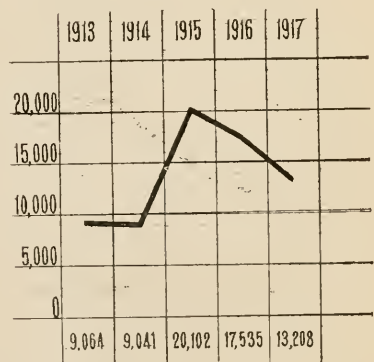
8. Wassermann Tests.



9. Diagnostic Examinations of Diphtheria.

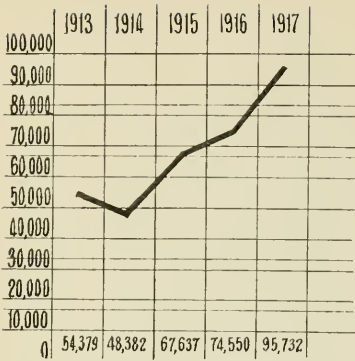


10. Diagnostic Examinations of Sputum for Tubercle Bacilli.

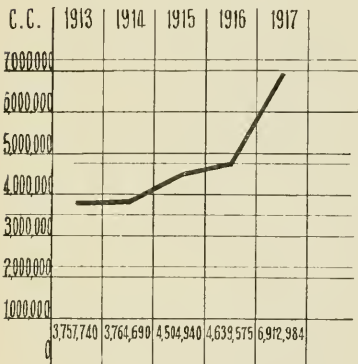


11. Diagnostic Examinations for Typhoid.

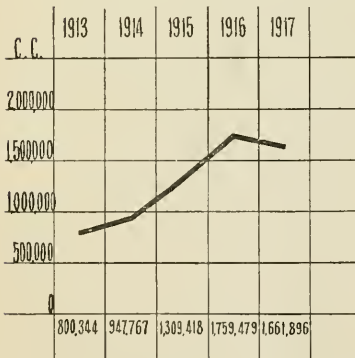
In its supervision of the milk supply, the Department of Health has greatly increased the number of specimens examined bacteriologically.



12. Bacterial Examinations of Milk.



13. Sera produced for Diagnostic, Prophylactic and Therapeutic Use.

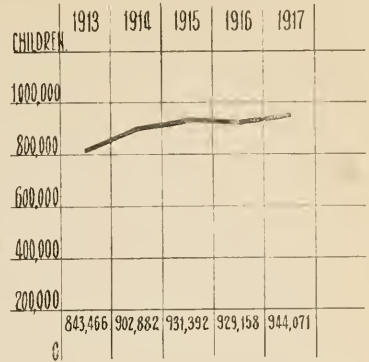


14. Vaccines produced for Prophylactic and Therapeutic use.

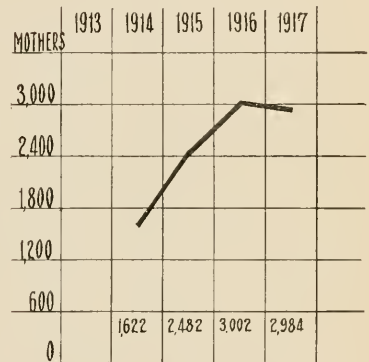
Owing to the increased demand at home and abroad for the products of the laboratory of the Department there have been made and sold greatly increased quantities of sera and vaccines for diagnostic, prophylactic and therapeutic use. (See charts 13 and 14.)

With the increase in the public school population and the addition of the parochial schools to the supervision of the Department, a greatly increased burden has been thrown upon the school medical inspection system. Quicker and invaluable results not yet attained could be had if the pleas of the Department were heeded and a really adequate force of doctors and nurses were allowed for this service.

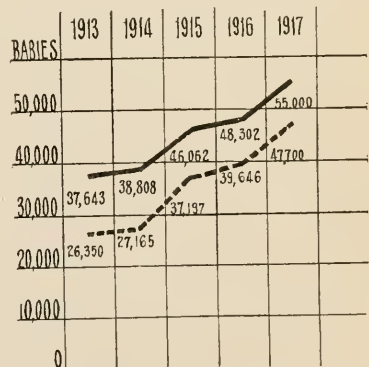
The supervision of expectant mothers, one of the most profitable forms of preventive medicine, and one giving large returns in the form of a reduction of maternal and infant mortality, has grown steadily and could be multiplied many fold with a more liberal provision for medical and nursing service. The same is equally true of the supervision of infants under two years of age.



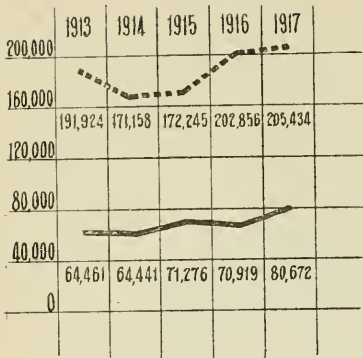
15. Public and Parochial School Children under Supervision.



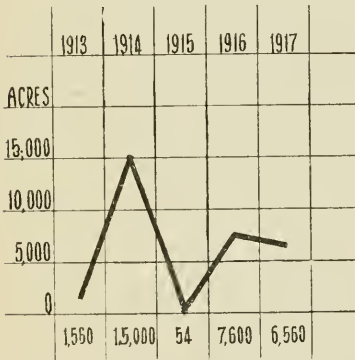
16. Expectant Mothers Supervised.



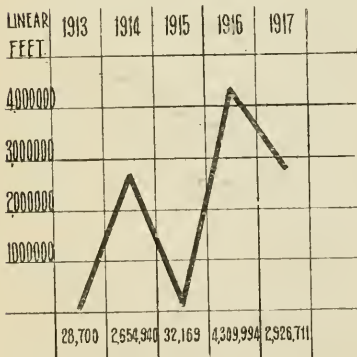
17. Children under 2 ——— and under 1 - - - - - attending Baby Health Stations.



18. Searches in Bureau of Records
 Transcripts made from Records



19. New acreage of marsh (fresh or salt) drained to prevent mosquito breeding under contract and by Department of Health force.

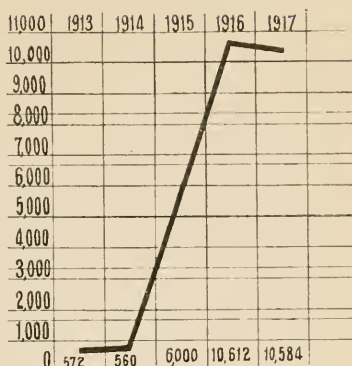


20. Linear feet of new drainage ditches dug to prevent mosquito breeding.

The natural growth of the city and many requirements connected with the war and the draft have resulted in greater demand upon the Registrar of the Department for searches and transcripts of records.

In completing the constructive engineering program for the elimination of the mosquito, all the large areas of salt and fresh water marsh in the city limits have either been drained or filled, or the work is contracted for and being rapidly brought to completion.

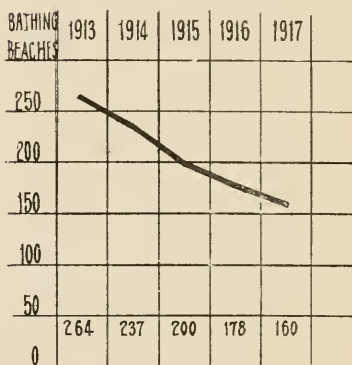
The complete supervision of stables is now an accomplished task and a reduction in the prevalence of flies has obviously taken place. In the absence of adequate field data, however, this reduction cannot be stated statistically.



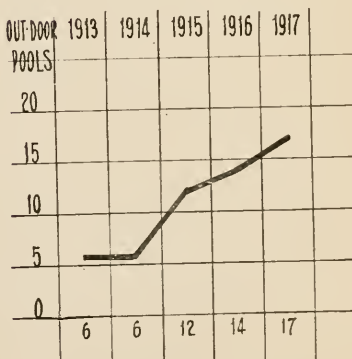
21. Horse stables under supervision and permits.

Owing to the increasing and dangerous sewage pollution of the rivers and harbors along the City's waterfront, sanitary safety has required the closing of many of the public bathing establishments on various beaches.

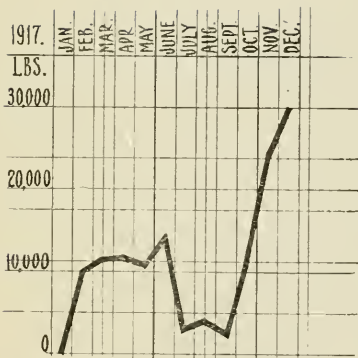
To meet the pressing need for bathing facilities which form one of the best resources for recreation and personal hygiene, a number of new open-air bathing pools have been built and operated in accordance with high standards of cleanliness in all the boroughs of the City.



22. Public bathing beaches.



23. Outdoor public bathing pools.

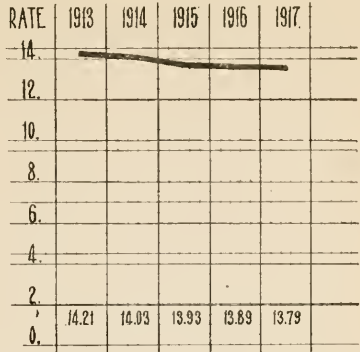


24. Pounds of horse-meat sold at 6 cents—15 cents a pound.

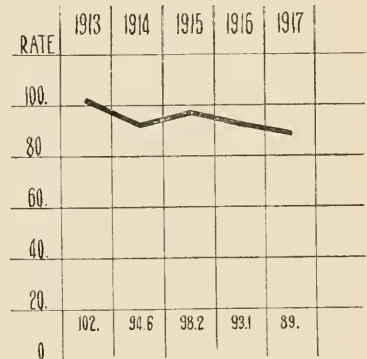
A new source of wholesome food supply, namely horse meat, has been made available during the past year and the rapid extension of the business even under the most rigid restrictions fully justifies this innovation. Meat at eight to sixteen cents per pound is a boon to many and a palatable luxury to those who are wise and unprejudiced.

RESULTS.

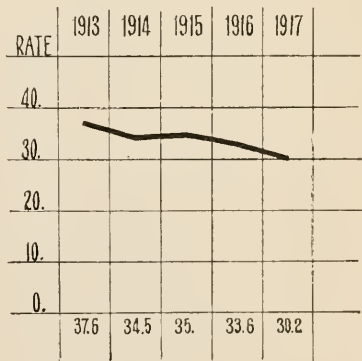
To what degree education, inspection, law enforcement, or the general improvement in the standards of living is responsible, is of less interest to the householder and business man or mother of a family, than to the technical epidemiologist or administrator. The records here presented are certainly encouraging and will undoubtedly be studied with interest. The general death rate, the infant mortality rate, the death rate for children under five, and the death rates of many of the more important preventable diseases show a gratifying reduction.



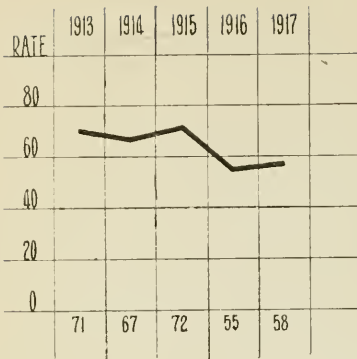
25. Crude death rate from all causes, at all ages per 1,000 population.



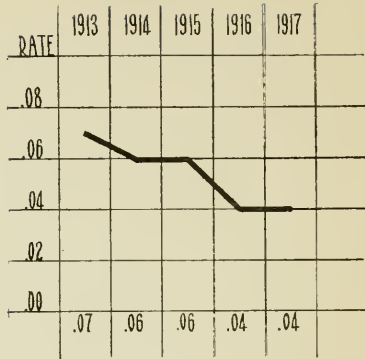
26. Death rate under 1 year per 1,000 reported births.



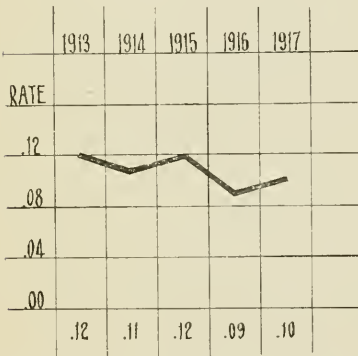
27. Death rate under 5 years from all causes per 1,000 population under 5 years.



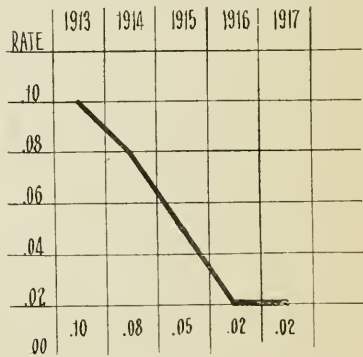
28. Death rate from Diarrhoeal Diseases under 5 years, per 1,000 population under 5 years.



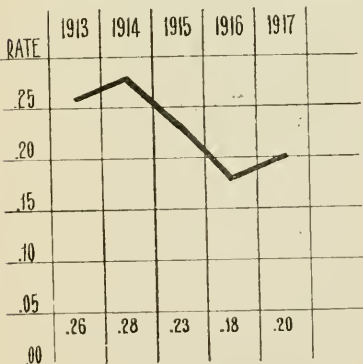
29. Death rate from Typhoid per 1,000 population.



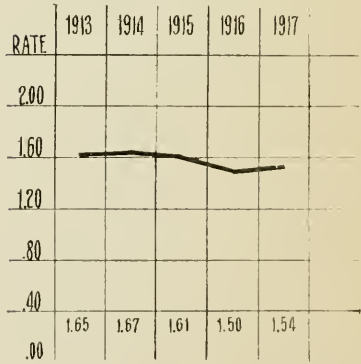
30. Death rate from Measles per 1,000 population.



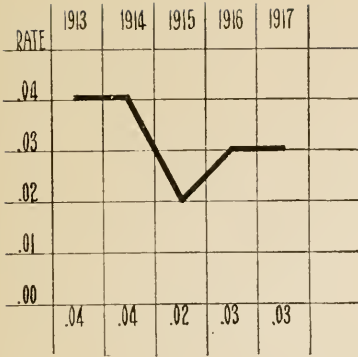
31. Death rate from Scarlet Fever per 1,000 population.



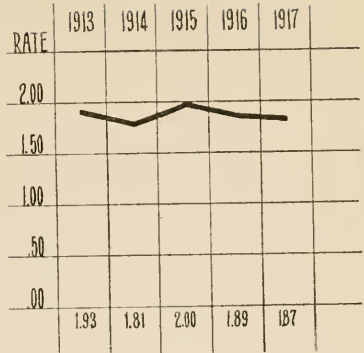
32. Death rate from Diphtheria and Croup per 1,000 population.



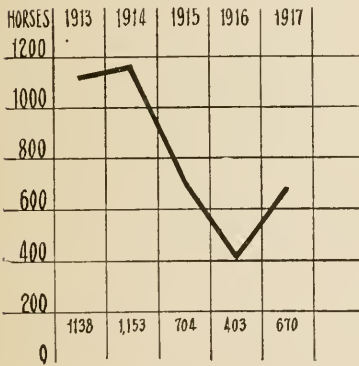
33. Death rate from Pulmonary Tuberculosis per 1,000 population.



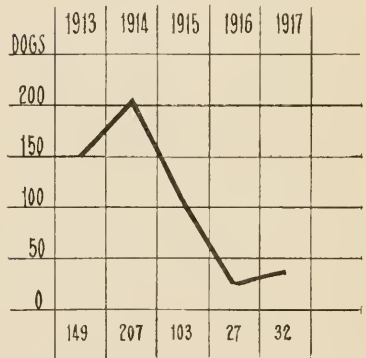
34. Death rate from Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis per 1,000 population.



35. Death rate from Broncho and Lobar Pneumonia per 1,000 population.

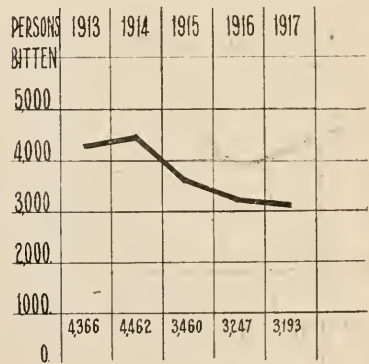


36. Horses condemned for Glanders.

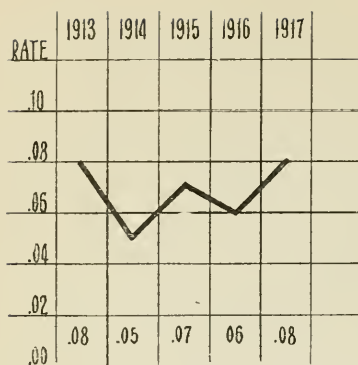


37. Rabid dogs collected and destroyed.

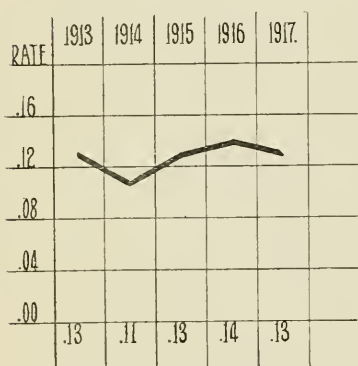
Education and a judicious use of the police power has reduced the number of instances in which people have been bitten by unmuzzled or improperly muzzled dogs.



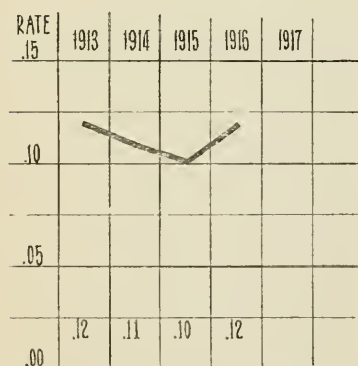
38. Persons bitten by dogs.



39. Death rate from Whooping Cough per 1,000 population.



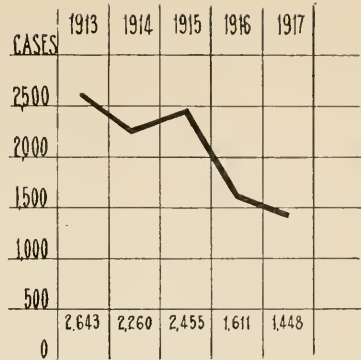
40. Death rate from Acute Bronchitis per 1,000 population.



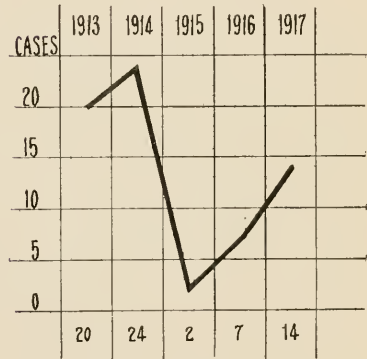
41. Death rate from street accidents per 1,000 population.

In whooping cough, acute bronchitis and street accidents, each of which is properly considered a preventable cause of death, the death rate has remained the same and these constitute so considerable a proportion of all deaths, that special effort must continue to be directed against each of them, through educational means chiefly, aided especially in the case of street accidents by adequate provision for playgrounds for children, and by some remedy for many of the intolerable conditions of street traffic.

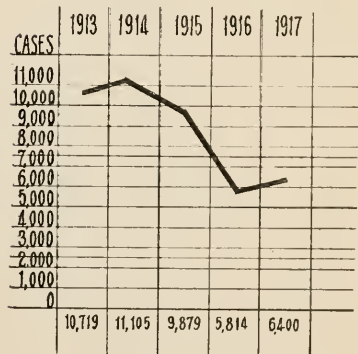
Not only have there been fewer *deaths* from many of the preventable diseases (which might of itself be an indication merely of a decreased virulence of the disease, or of a more successful quality of medical care of the patients) but there has been a reduction in the actual prevalence of many of the common preventable diseases as well. One must, of course, always acknowledge the probability of incomplete reporting of these notifiable diseases.



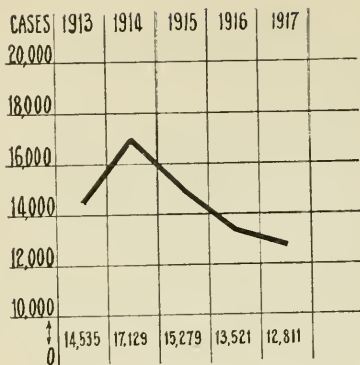
42. Cases of Typhoid Fever reported.



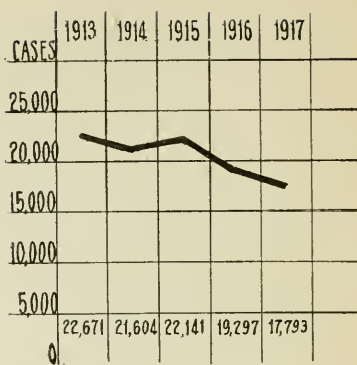
43. Cases of Small Pox reported.



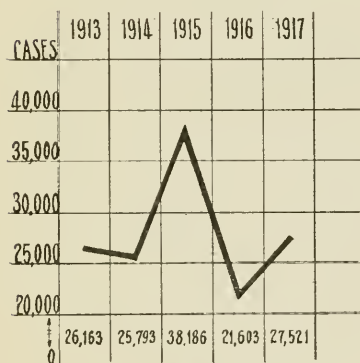
44. Cases of Scarlet Fever reported.



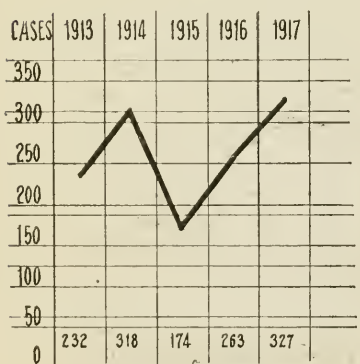
45. Cases of Diphtheria and Croup reported.



46. Cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis reported.



47. Cases of Measles reported.



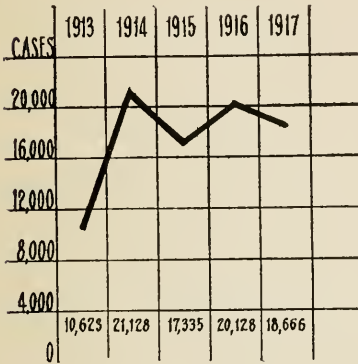
48. Cases of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis reported.

Measles is a disease of such universal prevalence and with such extreme periodic biennial or triennial incidence that no record extending over four or five years can give any correct impression as to increases or diminution; there is, however, no good reason to believe that any material impression has been made upon its incidence or severity by departmental service.

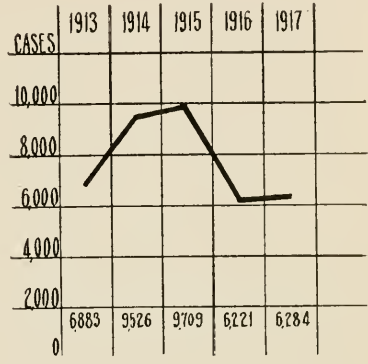
Meningitis is also a disease of irregular prevalence and the wide periods at which it becomes epidemic in character renders any record for a period of five years of little importance. The disease has, however, shown a tendency to increase in various cities throughout the country in the past twelve months.

Whooping cough is so incompletely reported that records of its incidence are of no value.

The reporting of syphilis and gonorrhoea is not yet sufficiently common or complete among physicians outside of hospital, dispensary and institution practice, to be used as a sound basis for judging of the extent of their prevalence throughout the City, but the record of the past five years is interesting even though incomplete.



49. Cases of Syphilis reported.



50. Cases of Gonorrhoea reported.

Other Accomplishments.

Of the nine bureaus of the Department, the work of the Sanitary Bureau, the Bureau of Food and Drugs, and the Bureau of Public Health Education, can least well be expressed in figures or concrete results.

So far as the last named is concerned, it must be remembered that every agent of the Department is in effect an educator, a teacher of the laws of hygiene, and the ways of avoiding disease. The notes and articles in the daily press, too often taken as the main educational effort of the Department, are but the echo of a great volume of organized health teaching, which permeates to and through schools, settlement houses, Y. M. C. A.'s, shops and homes.

A good share of the credit for some of the reduction in disease and deaths above recorded, especially such as is due to improper

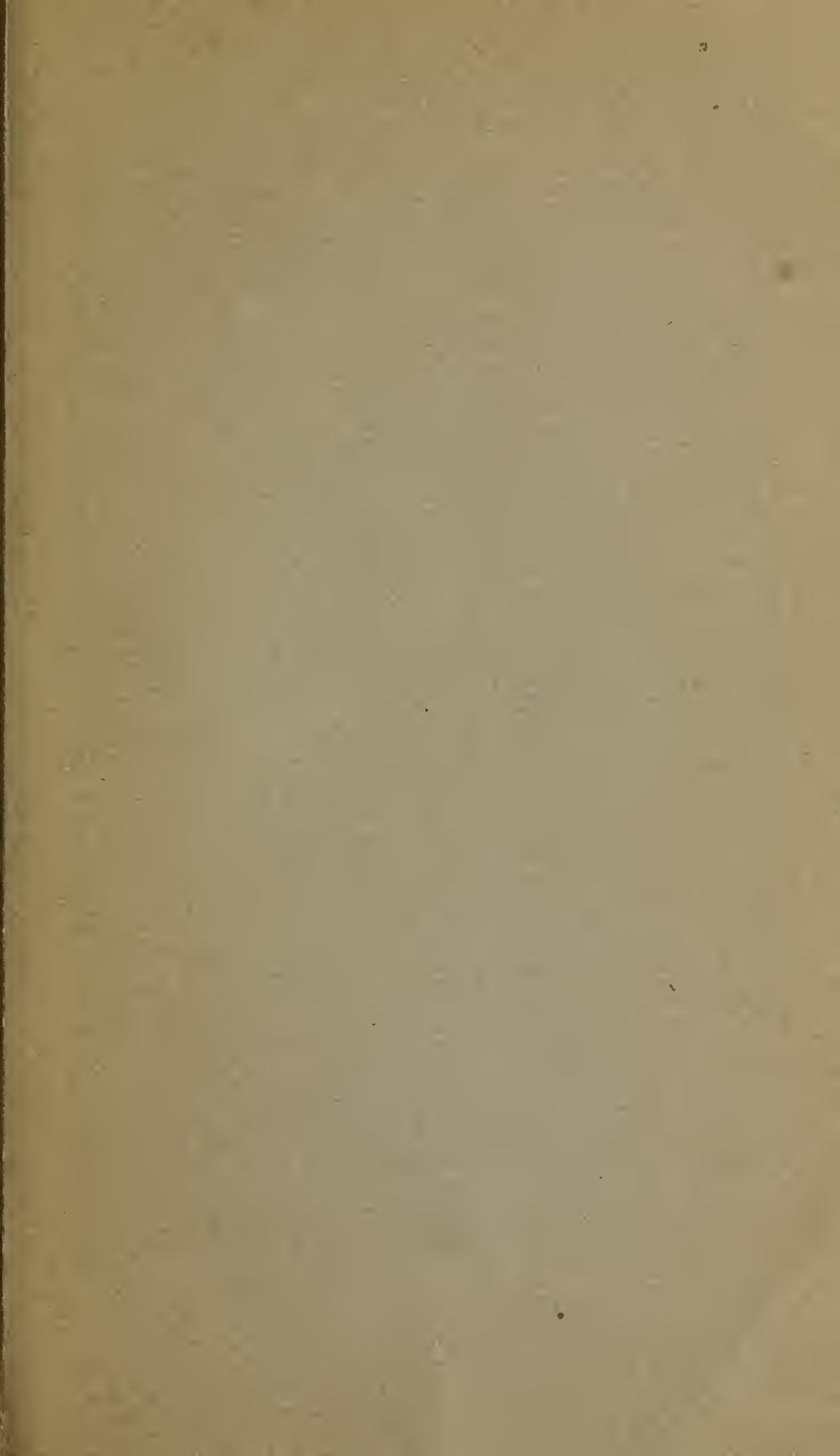
disposal of human discharges and to unhygienic conditions of shops and living premises must be given to the Sanitary Bureau, and it is by the work of this Bureau that the control of the breeding of flies and mosquitoes has been so far accomplished.

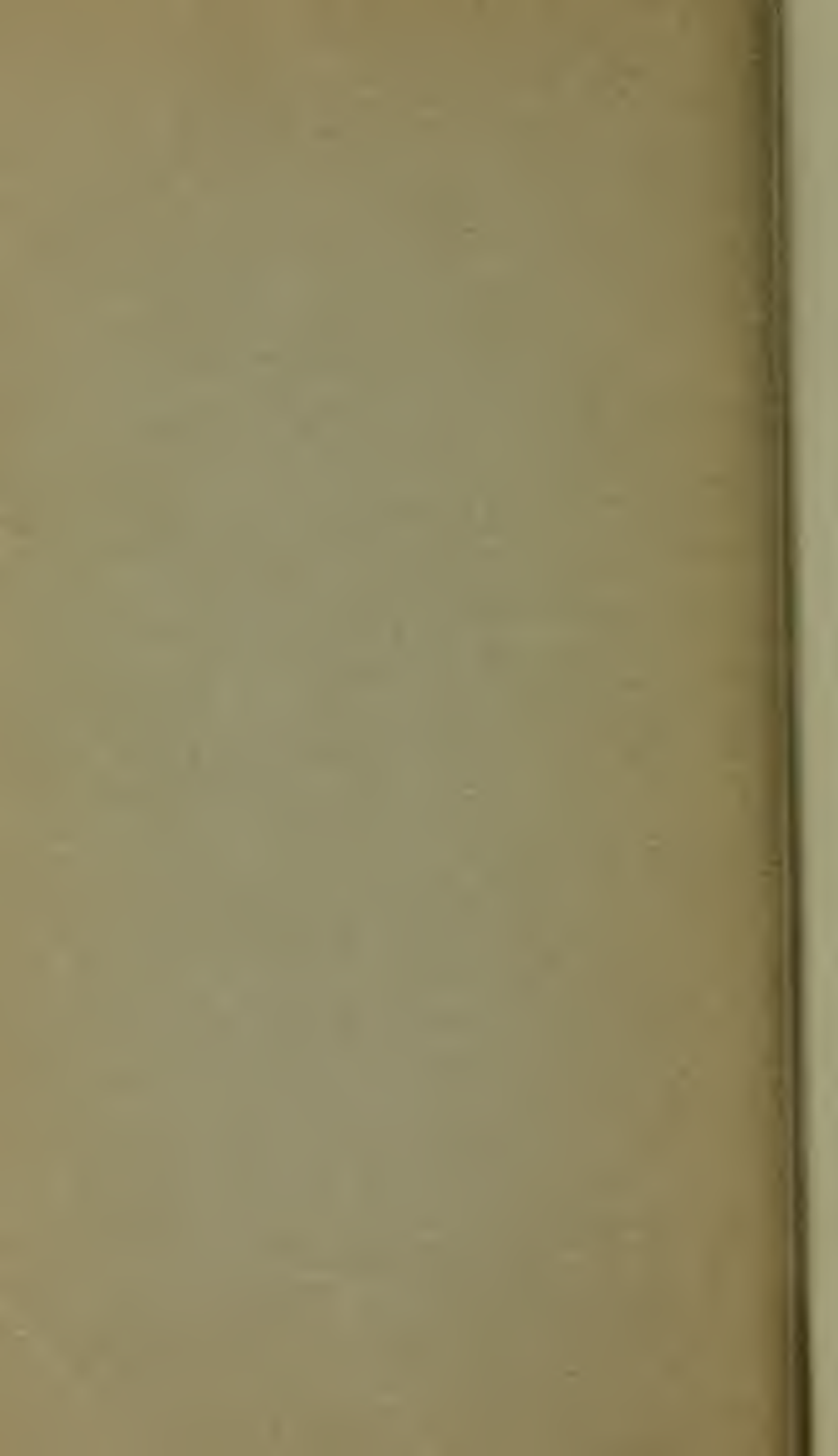
The outstanding accomplishments of the Bureau of Food and Drugs have been: (1) The effective control of the milk supply, so that at present 98 per cent. of the milk consumed in New York City is pasteurized, the remainder being of a grade safely used raw. In 1913, only 60 per cent. of the milk supply was pasteurized and decidedly less than 2 per cent. was safe for use raw. (2) The extension of its inspection service, so as to control, under suitable regulations, every establishment in the city where food is stored, handled or prepared. (3) The scoring and issuing of permits to all restaurants and public eating places, under conditions of service, equipment and materials, which gives the public a protection never attempted before 1915.

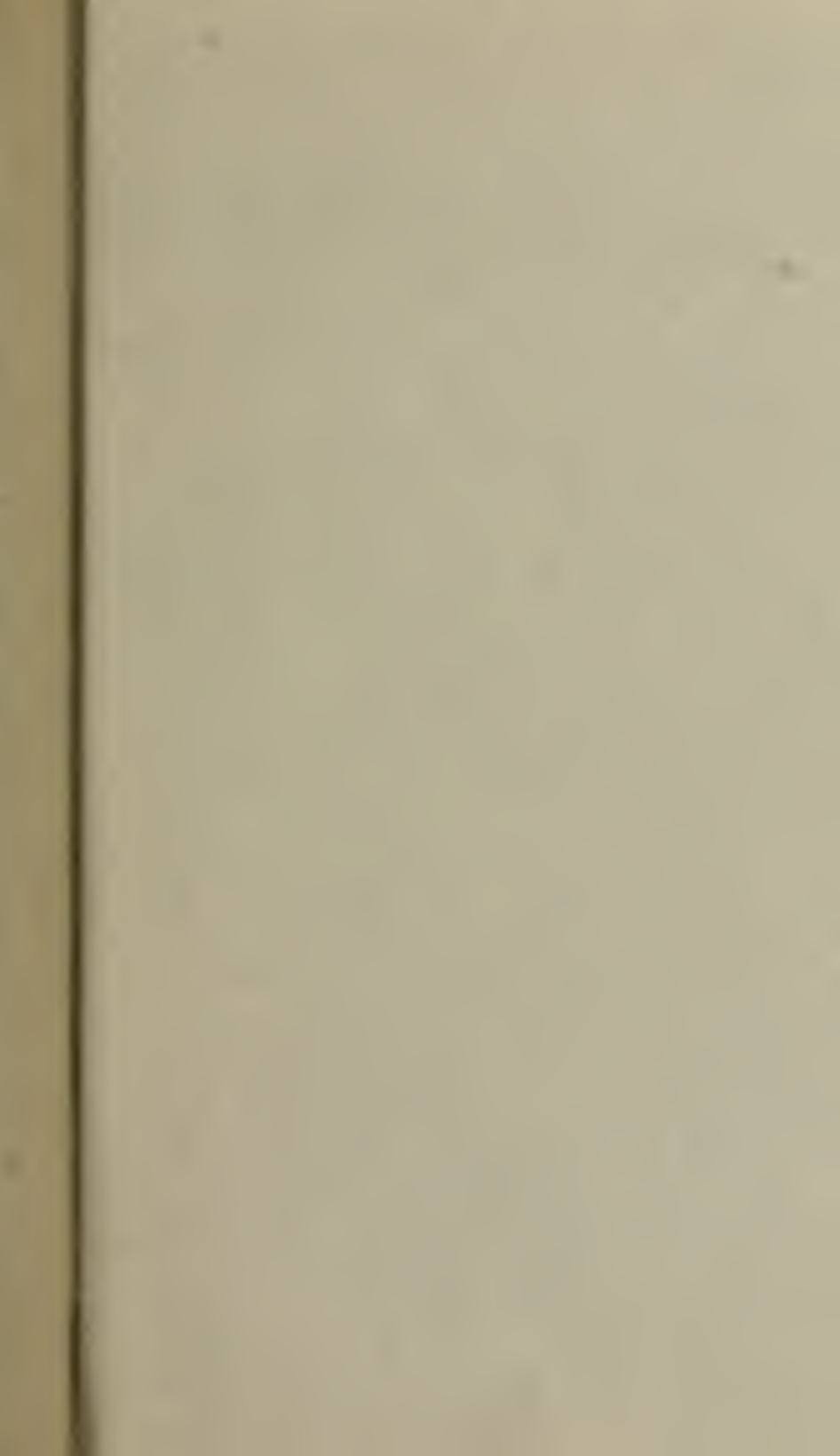
A little contribution to the service of the City and a modest improvement in results is recorded.

There remain great opportunities open to the next administration for immediate attack. Four are of great importance and, if met with vigor and generosity, will not only contribute much to health in the homes of the wage earners, but will also reduce the burden, upon the taxpayers, which otherwise will result because of inevitable disability and disease. I refer to the extension of (1) Care of expectant mothers; (2) Periodic medical examinations and supervision during sickness of all city employees; (3) Adequate facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of syphilis and gonorrhoea, and (4) Sufficient supervision of the hazards of industry, to prevent avoidable diseases of occupation.

Public health is purchasable. Within natural limitations a community can determine its own death rate.







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